



## VARIANCES TO STANDARDS APPLICATION

March 2, 2015

Purpose: ARM 10.55.604.1. A local board of trustees may apply to the Board of Public Education through the Superintendent of Public Instruction to implement a variance to a standard or a section of standards, excluding standards stating statutory criteria, standards pertaining to educator licensure or endorsement, and content standards as defined by the Board of Public Education and provided in guidance from the Superintendent of Public Instruction.

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### DUE DATES

- First semester implementation; March 2, 2015
- Second semester implementation; July 6, 2015

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**COUNTY:** Flathead

**DISTRICT:** Cayuse Prairie

**LIST THE SCHOOL OR MULTIPLE SCHOOLS THAT ARE REQUESTING THE VARIANCE(S):** Cayuse  
Prairie Elementary and Middle School

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1. **Is this an initial application (2 years) or a Renewal application (3 years)?**  
Initial
  2. **Is this for first semester implementation or second semester implementation?**  
First Semester
  3. **Standard(s) for which a variance is requested, i.e., 10.55.709. If there is a program delivery standard, be sure to list it as well. For example, 10.55.1801.**  
10.55.705 (2)
  4. **Please attach evidence through official minutes of the board of trustees that local school community stakeholders were involved in the consideration and development of the proposed variance to standards. Stakeholder groups include trustees, administrators, teachers, classified school staff, parents, community members, and students as applicable.**

Variance of Standards - As Amy Piazzola had explained at the last Board meeting, the school is deficient .1 for a principal in the middle school due to our numbers. Amy Piazzola went over the rubric and the variance of standards proposal. The goal of the variance to provide a sound and budgeted education model. It's projected that the cost for an additional .1







administrative position would be about \$6000.00. This money can be used towards education instead of administration if the variance is accepted. Amy Piazzola discussed how she arrived at consensus about proceeding with this variance. She spoke with staff members to see if anyone was interested in getting an Administrative Degree. She found one staff member that is contemplating the idea. She then asked trustees for their input after discussing the purpose of the variance. Amy had researched other variances similar to the one we are creating for submittal to OPI. She listed possible ideas for objectives and asked trustees they would like to add or change the suggested objectives. Amy Piazzola went over the measurable duties that would be required by her to show the quality of education is being met. All reports will be submitted to OPI to show goals and objectives are being met with regards to the variance. Jack Thatcher asked if it would be helpful to have that .1 position filled. Amy Piazzola said she would like to have that position filled, however we don't have anyone on staff right now with an administrative certification and it would be at least a year before that could happen. So the variance needs to be implemented now. Jack Thatcher moved to accept the proposed Variance of Standards. Jason Rausch seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

**5. Please provide evidence that the board of trustees adopted its application for variance at an official, properly noticed meeting of its board of trustees.**

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**6. Describe the variance requested.**

The District requests the Cayuse Prairie School District #10, an independent elementary and middle school district, located East of Kalispell, Montana, serving 222 students in grades K-6 (185 students)





and 7<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> (37 students), be allowed to have one person serve as the District Superintendent and Schools' Principal. The District is a mere .1 FTE under the accreditation standard

**7. Provide a brief statement of the mission and goals of this proposed variance.**

This variance is requested in order to allow the district to continue to provide a cost effective, efficient, and educationally sound administrative model. The goals of the variance are to provide a cost effective administration and provide an educationally sound administrative model.

**8. List at least one specific measurable objective(s) that demonstrates that the proposed variance will meet or exceed the results under the current standard(s).**

The objective of this variance is to continue to provide an educationally sound administrative model without increasing cost to the district of approximately \$6,000.00. (The approximate cost is considering if the district were able to find someone on staff willing to get their administrative degree.)

In addition, there are numerous performance objectives that can be sited and carried out by one administrator. These include:

1. The Superintendent/Principal shall attend 100% of the school board meetings serving the role of adviser and liaison as stated in job description.
2. The Superintendent/Principal shall conduct staff evaluations as stated in the Master Contract.
3. The Superintendent/Principal shall complete all reports required by the Office of Public Instruction.
4. The Superintendent/Principal shall monitor student behavior.
5. The Superintendent/Principal provide a yearly calendar of school events posted on our website.
6. The Superintendent/Principal shall carryout all duties assigned by the Board of Trustees and the State of MT.

**9. What data or evidence will be gathered to document progress toward meeting the measurable objectives?**

The data collected to document the primary objective is available through a review of the districts expenditures. If the proposed variance is approved, the district expenditures for administration would not increase by .1% due to adding administrative costs.

The data collected will be documented as follows:

1. The District Clerk shall document attendance at all board meetings.
2. The Superintendent/Principal will report to the Board of Trustees the dates of all formal observations.
3. OPI monitors report submissions.
4. A student behavior log shall be kept using pbisapps.org
5. The yearly school event calendar will be posted on our school website: cayuseprairie.com



6. The Board of Trustees shall evaluate the performance of the Superintendent/Principal on an annual basis.

**10. In what way does this variance to standard meet the specific needs of the students in your school(s)?**

This variance allows the Board of Trustees to meet the specific needs of students by allowing the allocation of resources to areas that directly impact students; keeping instructional aides to assist with student support. The variance is workable with the current administration as she currently is meeting the needs to students in the district without adding administrative staffing.

**11. Variance to Standard: Outline how and why the proposed variance would be:**

**a. Workable. (Sufficient district resources are available for the success of the variance.)**

This variance allows the Board of Trustees to meet the specific needs of students by allowing the allocation of resources to areas that directly impact students; keeping instructional aides to assist with student support. Administration works to be proactive and efficient in all duties.

**b. Educationally sound. (Applicant has relied on sound research as a rationale for the variance.)**

Educational research is generally positive when it comes to small schools. The concept of one district, one school, and one administrator is an example that reflects the small schools model. Keeping the focus on student's educational support is always a sound decision.

**c. Where applicable, aligned with program standards under ARM 10.55.1101 through 10.55.1901.**

N/A

**12. Designed to meet the content standards for this area of the curriculum (only applies to those standards which also have related curriculum content standards).**

N/A

**RENEWAL APPLICATION ONLY: Please attach a summary of the data gathered to demonstrate that the variance cycle ending June 30, met or exceeded the standard. State the measurable objective for the initial or previous application.**





Montana  
Office of Public Instruction  
Denise Juneau, State Superintendent

**Required school district signatures:**

Board Chair Name: Kevin Fox

Board Chair Signature: [Signature] Date: 2-17-15

Superintendent Name: Amy Piazzola

Superintendent Signature: [Signature] Date: 2-17-15

**Mail your signed form to:**

Accreditation and Educator Preparation Division  
Office of Public Instruction  
PO Box 202501  
Helena, MT 59620-2501





Montana  
Office of Public Instruction  
Denise Juneau, State Superintendent

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**OPI USE ONLY**

Superintendent of Public Instruction

*Denise Juneau*

Date 5/14/15

☒ Approve ☐ Disapprove

Board of Public Education Chair

*Sharon Carroll*

Date 5/7/15

☒ Approve ☐ Disapprove

